

Shan-shan to the south of Lop-nōr and passing several stages which will be discussed below, 'one crosses the river Chū-mo, and at the end of five hundred li arrives at the garrison of *Po-hsien* 播仙 ("the garrison of the banished R̥ši") which is the ancient town of Chū-mo 且末.<sup>33</sup> It was Kao-tsung who changed its name in the period Shang-yüan (A. D. 674-676).' That this place was actually occupied at the beginning of the eighth century may be concluded from the record which the *T'ang shu* makes of a meeting there between a Chinese commissioner and a chief of the Western Turks who was retreating towards Sha-chou along the southern route, some time between A. D. 706-708.<sup>34</sup> This record speaks of the 'town of Po-hsien', which confirms the date given for the change of name.<sup>34a</sup> It is true that Chū-mo already figures in the T'ang Annals about A. D. 640 as one of the many territories subject to the vast dominion of the Western Turks.<sup>35</sup> But the list there given seems purely formal, and the mention in it of Chū-mo can in no way invalidate the statement of an eyewitness like Hsüan-tsang, who a few years later found the town completely deserted.

We have no further record of Charchan until we come to the account by Marco Polo, who passed here along the route from Khotan to Lop and into China about A. D. 1273-4.<sup>36</sup> His description of the 'road' which took him there from the 'Province of Pein', including the present tracts of Chīra, Keriya, and Niya, has already been quoted. 'Charchan', he tells us, 'is a Province of Great Turkey, lying between north-east and east. The people worship Mahomet. There are numerous towns and villages, and the chief city of the kingdom bears its name, Charchan. The Province contains rivers which bring down Jasper and Chalcedony, and these are carried for sale into Cathay, where they find great prices. The whole of the Province is sandy.'<sup>37</sup> It is clear that Marco must have seen the oasis in a comparatively flourishing condition, and it seems difficult not to connect this with the abundant traffic which must have passed along this ancient route into China at a period when the vast extent and the effective organization of the Mongol conquests had thrown China open to trade-intercourse with the most distant parts of Asia. The mention of 'Jasper and Chalcedony', just as in the case of the 'Province of Pein',<sup>38</sup> undoubtedly refers primarily to jade, which is found among the rubble brought down by the Charchan River and in the beds of all the large rivers descending to the Tārīm Basin through the northernmost chain of the K'un-lun. But that true jasper and chalcedony occur here also is proved by the worked stones of these materials, evidently belonging to the neolithic period, which I collected from eroded ground in the Lop-nōr desert, and the material for which must have been derived from the K'un-lun detritus.<sup>39</sup>

Marco  
Polo's  
description  
of Charchan.

Charchan does not appear to be mentioned by Shāh Rukh's envoys, whose journey in A. D. 1422 along the desert route from Su-chou to Khotan is the next in time of which we possess a record.<sup>40</sup> But Mīrzā Ḥaidar in the sixteenth century knew its name, under the varying

Charchan  
mentioned  
by Mīrzā  
Ḥaidar.

mented from a MS. translation of the full text as found in *T'ang Shu*, chap. XLIII b, p. 15 recto, which M. Chavannes has very kindly placed at my disposal; see Appendix A.

<sup>33</sup> For notes on the several stages indicated by this itinerary west of Chū-mo, including 'the military post of the town of Lan' which may, perhaps, be identified with the T'ang fort of the Endere Site, see *Ancient Khotan*, i. p. 436, note 14; also above, pp. 293 sq.

<sup>34</sup> See Chavannes, *Turcs occid.*, p. 185.

<sup>34a</sup> For this date cf. now Pelliot, *J. Asiat.*, 1916, janvier-février, p. 121, note 3.

<sup>35</sup> Cf. Chavannes, *Turcs occid.*, pp. 30, 57, 306.

<sup>36</sup> Herrmann, *Seidenstrassen*, p. 99, assumes that the

*Ta-thun* mentioned in the itinerary of a Chinese mission dispatched to Khotan about A. D. 940 is the same as Charchan; cf. Rémusat, *Ville de Khotan*, p. 78. The identification is possible, but I can find no direct evidence for it.

<sup>37</sup> Cf. Yule, *Marco Polo*, i. p. 194. It was Sir Henry Yule who first discovered 'the continued existence of Marco's Charchan' through a route attached to Mr. Johnson's original report on his journey to Khotan in 1865; see *ibid.*, i. p. 195, note.

<sup>38</sup> Cf. Yule, *Marco Polo*, i. p. 191.

<sup>39</sup> Cf. Mr. Reginald A. Smith's article on those worked stones, *The Stone Age in Chinese Turkestan*, in *Man*, xi. (1911) pp. 81 sqq.; also below, p. 357.

<sup>40</sup> Cf. Yule-Cordier, *Cathay*<sup>2</sup>, i. p. 286.